

Bible Teacher Fuschia Pickett Dies

The ministry veteran was regarded by many as a spiritual mother in the charismatic movement

Respected Bible teacher and author Fuchsia Pickett died in her Tennessee home Jan. 30. She was 85.

A well-educated theologian who was in ministry for more than 50 years, Pickett influenced many Christian leaders, including Benny Hinn and Judson Cornwall, and was considered a spiritual mother by many in the charismatic movement.

Pickett's friends say she was recovering from pneumonia but that she died of natural causes. Joan Gebhardt, who was staying with Pickett at her home in Kingsport, told Charisma that Pickett died in her sleep.

"She went to be with Jesus very peacefully," said Gebhardt, who had been Pickett's close friend for the last 15 years. "She wasn't suffering."

Although she once traveled extensively, preaching and teaching, Pickett's deteriorating health had prevented her from maintaining a rigorous speaking schedule in recent years. She also suffered from scoliosis, which caused her to sit when ministering before large crowds.

Judy Wirt, administrator of Fuchsia Pickett Ministries for the last three years, told Charisma that Pickett was admitted to the hospital for pneumonia in October. Her monthlong hospital stay was preceded by what turned out to be her last speaking

engagement.

“She spoke at a church in LaVergne, Tenn. It’s very appropriate that the church is called The Father’s House,” said Wirt, noting that Pickett ministered just eight times in 2003. “At that time, she told the church that she wouldn’t be coming back.”

Sue Curran, pastor of Shekinah Church, the Blountville, Tenn., congregation Pickett and her husband, Leroy, had attended since 1988, visited Pickett the week she died. “During my last conversation with her she was desirous to live as long as the Lord wanted her to,” Curran said. “Our church prayed to that end. I told her the body of Christ needs her message. And she said she appreciated that because she wanted to be needed.”

Respected Bible teacher and author Judson Cornwall, who had been a close friend of Pickett’s for about 35 years, told Charisma that she will be “greatly missed by Christians all over the world.”

“Her insight into the scriptures was phenomenal,” said Cornwall, 79, whose itinerant ministry ended in 2001 after he was diagnosed with inoperable cancer on his spine. “She saw what many missed, and her teaching ministry was a blessing to all who would listen. The life that was in her seemed to be available to all who would listen with spiritual ears.

“Her gifting was manifold,” added Cornwall, whose latest book, *Dying With Grace*, will release in May from Charisma House. “As a teacher, she was par excellence. I personally will miss most the spiritual impartation that came out of her.”

Reared in a Methodist family, Pickett was led to Christ by a Presbyterian friend, educated at John Wesley College and later ordained by the Methodist Church. She spent 17 years in ministry before she was dramatically healed of a fatal bone disease and filled with the Holy Spirit in 1959 in a Pentecostal Holiness church.

Four years later, she saw a vision of a huge hydroelectric power plant, which she told Charisma in 1997 was God's way of showing her how He planned to network churches together and pour out His Spirit in revival. "I've lived to see it come in," Pickett said. "I feel the heavens are breaking. The revival has come, but the flood hasn't. I think the Lord has brought us to a place where we are now willing to let the Lord do it.

"[The revival] will bring repentance and restitution," Pickett added. "The church will reflect the glory of God."

Pickett held an earned doctorate in theology and a doctorate in divinity. Saying she believed God had called her to both teach and preach, Pickett spent more than 40 years as a Bible teacher and 27 years as a pastor. In 1971 she founded Fountain Gate Ministries, which included a church and Bible college. She relinquished leadership of Fountain Gate in 1988 to enter full-time traveling ministry.

"I don't want to stand before the Lord and know I did not do enough for Him," Pickett once said. "I want to know I did all I could do to please Him."

Recently, Charisma House released a new series of Pickett's classic teachings, including The Five Laws of the Dying Seed,

God's Purpose for You and Possess Your Promised Land, as well as several titles on the person of the Holy Spirit.

A memorial service was held Feb. 3 at Shekinah Church. Pickett is survived by her husband, Leroy; her son, Daryl; three grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

Eric Tiansay